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President Gave Him Libya Cables--Billy

Statement Disclosed by U.S. Attorney;
Carter Says They Only Discussed Data

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WASHINGTON—Billy Carter has told federal investigators that President Carter gave him State Department cables reporting favorably on Billy's controversial 1978 trip to Libya, Joel S. Lisker, the government's chief attorney in the case, said Wednesday.

Although the cables carried only a low secrecy classification, Billy Carter's assertion, if true, would further entangle the President in the controversy over his brother's service for the radical Libyan regime, identified by the CIA as a bankroller of international terrorists.

President Carter acknowledged discussing the "low-classification cables" with his brother but said, through Deputy White House Press Secretary Ray Jenkins, that he did not recall showing Billy the texts or giving him copies.

Lisker Says Billy Lied

Lisker said also in an interview with several reporters that Billy had lied to him and an FBI agent when they were questioning him about money he had received from the Libyans. Lisker indicated that Billy had tried to cover up the nature of a \$220,000 payment from the Libyan government, which the Justice Department has said was compensation for his lobbying services but which Billy has described as a loan.

The President's brother, who has become a major political headache, refused to answer Lisker's questions about whether he had attempted to influence, through his brother or others, a U.S. ban on shipping American aircraft to the Libyan regime, Lisker said.

Billy responded to the question with an "expletive" and said it was "none of the government's business," Lisker told reporters. He granted the interview Wednesday

afternoon after fragmented reports of the new information began to leak earlier in the day from the House Judiciary Committee.

Billy Carter first mentioned the State Department cables when Lisker and FBI Agent Richard E. Fugatt were interviewing him Jan. 16 in a room at the Best Western Motel in Americus, Ga.

Lisker said he (Lisker) had copies of the cables from the U.S. charge d'affaires in Tripoli spread on a coffee table and that Billy glanced at them. "I've got that CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) cable traffic," Lisker quoted Billy as saying.

Lisker, chief of the Justice Department's foreign agents' registration unit, said he noted that they were State Department, not CIA, cables and asked Billy where he had obtained them.

"Jimmy gave 'em to me," Lisker said Billy responded.

"You mean the President?" Lisker said he asked.

Nodded Affirmatively

Billy nodded affirmatively and said, "I got them at the house," Lisker said.

"Very interesting," Lisker said he remarked as he made note of Billy's claim on an FBI reporting form.

"I put it in there because it's something we want to look into," Lisker said Wednesday.

At the White House, Jenkins said the "low classification" given the State Department cables meant they were confidential or for official use only.

Lisker said the cables reported on the arrival in Libya of a Georgia delegation that Billy headed, identified the Libyan officials who welcomed them and then described a reception the group was given.

"I don't know if he was telling the

truth when he mentioned the cables," Lisker said. "He does pull your chain (tease)." But he added that "we will follow it (the question of the cables) up with the President."

\$20,000 Libyan Check

The conclusion that Billy lied during the questioning by Lisker and the FBI agent was reached on the strength of a deposit slip that his lawyers turned over to Lisker Tuesday. The slip showed Billy had deposited a \$20,000 check from Libya on Dec. 31, 1979, in his joint account with his wife, Sybil, at the Columbus Bank & Trust Co. in Columbus, Ga.

That was more than two weeks before Billy omitted mention of the \$20,000 when Lisker asked him in the Jan. 16 interview what, if anything, he had received from the Libyans.

Billy listed 200 dinars, which Lisker said was worth about \$260, a saddle with silver woven into it, four gold bracelets he said were for his children, a silver and bronze serving platter and a scimitar.

According to Lisker, Billy Carter said that each of the visiting Americans has given a white envelope containing the 200 dinars by their Libyan hosts. He said he asked his aide, Randy Coleman, to donate the money to the American School in Tripoli for the purchase of a new copy of the Koran, Lisker recounted.

On May 30, Lisker said, he learned from "intelligence sources" that Billy had been paid the \$20,000 and had also received a \$200,000 check dated April 7.

Lisker said that only after prodding during an interview June 11 in Lisker's Washington office did Billy Carter acknowledge receipt of the funds. Billy initially said the \$20,000 was reimbursement for \$40,000 in expenses he incurred on the Libyan

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